

# Family protests killing of final year undergraduate by Anambra vigilantes

30th August 2024

| By Ikenna Obianeri

 Anambra State

Confusion has erupted at the Senator Stella Oduah's Estate, Akili-Ozizor community in Ogbaru Local Government Area of Anambra State, following the controversial circumstances that led to the shooting and killing of a final year Fine and Applied Arts student of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam, Anambra State, Noel Okechukwu.

*PUNCH Metro* gathered that the 27-year-old was shot dead by the local vigilante operatives attached to the estate on August 17.

But while the family members of the victim claimed that the local security of the community carelessly killed their son in cold blood for no reason, the security operatives disagreed, alleging the boy was shot because he was one of those who had been "looting and vandalising" properties in the estate.

Speaking to our correspondent on Thursday, father of the boy, Rex Okechukwu, disclosed that the local vigilantes shot his son dead inside the estate as he was going to buy fresh fish from a fish pond.

In a strongly-worded petition sent to the Divisional Police Officer at the Ogbaru Police Division, Atani, the distressed father, a one-time Secretary of Nigeria Union of Journalists, Anambra State council, stated that, according to eyewitnesses, the shooting occurred after an altercation ensued between the guards and his son.

The petition, a copy of which was made available to our correspondent read, “The incident occurred on Saturday, August 17, 2024. On the said day, my son, Noel Okechukwu, a 27-year-old final-year student of Ojukwu varsity, had left for Senator Stella Oduah’s Estate at Akili-Ozizor, a neighbouring community to buy fresh fish from a fish pond located inside the estate.

“On getting to the gate leading to the entrance of the estate, the private security guards disallowed him entrance and an altercation ensued between the guards and himself leading to one of the guards pulling the trigger of his pump action rifle and pumping bullets into his body which made him to slump.

“Soon after gunning him down, the guards started giving him water to drink and as soon as he took some quantities of the water, he gave up the ghost and the guards sent a motorcyclist who rushed to inform the bereaved family of the unfortunate incident.

## Related News

Rivers family accuses police of son’s arrest, torture

Traditional family planning method unreliable – Expert

Hoodlums attack mother, three family members in Ogun

“We, as the family members, are demanding justice against the private guards because they had no right to take the life of our son in such a brutish manner.”

He further insisted that even if they felt his son had committed any crime around the estate or within the entire Ogbaru area, the best thing would have been for them to arrest and hand him over to the police for prosecution and

not to execute him extrajudicially.

But in a swift reaction, when contacted if they have received any petition, the Divisional Police Officer, at Atani, Mr I. Andrew, confirmed the receipt of a petition.

Andrew added that the report he had concerning the incident was that the deceased was among those who had been looting and vandalising all the properties inside the estate.

The DPO said, “Yes, we have received a petition concerning the alleged shooting and killing. But the report I had before me concerning the incident is that the deceased was among those who had been looting and vandalising all the properties inside the estate.

“Apart from that community being an unknown gunmen-infested area, they said the deceased was caught with his gang members armed with pump action guns looting and vandalising the estate and when confronted, they opened fire on the security guards and the guards returned fire for the fire which led to his being gunned down.

“We doubt if the petitioner is actually the biological father of the deceased because he only came to the police station on August 23 to report the killing of his ‘son’ which took place on August 17.”

The DPO further said he had concluded arrangements to transfer the case file to the State Criminal Investigation Department, CID Annex, Awkuzu, for further investigation.